

## **IN THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

All claims have been canceled as follows:

### **Listing of Claims**

Claims 1-16 (Previously Canceled)

17 (Currently Amended). A method for preparing gum arabic having an improved emulsifying ability which comprises a step of heating the gum arabic, which is at least one gum arabic selected from the group consisting of blocks, beads, crude pulverizates, granules and pellets having an average particle diameter of not less than 1 mm, at a temperature of not less than 60°C in an atmosphere having a relative humidity of 30-100%, in the absence of an octenylsuccinic acid treatment step.

18.(Previously presented) The method according to Claim 17, wherein the gum arabic is heated in an atmosphere having a relative humidity of 70-100%.

19 (Previously presented). The method according to Claim 17, wherein the gum arabic is heated under closed-system constant-humidity conditions.

20 (Previously presented). The method according to Claim 17, wherein the temperature is 60-100°C and the relative humidity is 30-80%.

21 (Previously presented). The method according to Claim 20, wherein the relative humidity is 70-80%.

22 (Previously presented). The method according to Claim 17, wherein the temperature is 60-150°C, the relative humidity is 80-100%, and further comprising cooling it to a temperature not exceeding room temperature in an atmosphere having a relative humidity of not more than 75%.

23 (Previously presented). The method according to Claim 22, wherein the temperature is 60-100°C.

24 (Previously presented). The method according to Claim 17, wherein the temperature is 60-150°C, and heating is effected in a closed-system atmosphere wherein the relative humidity is 80-100% and further comprising cooling it to room temperature in an open system.

25 (Previously presented). The method according to Claim 24, wherein the temperature is 60-100°C.

26 (Previously presented). A modified gum arabic obtained by the method according to Claim 17.

27 (Previously presented). An emulsifier comprising the gum arabic having an improved emulsifying ability obtained by the method according to Claim 17 as an active ingredient.

28 (Previously presented). A method for preparing an emulsion which comprises using the gum arabic having an improved emulsifying ability obtained by the method according to Claim 17 as an emulsifier.

29 (Previously presented). A method according to Claim 28 wherein the emulsion is an O/W or W/O/W emulsion which contains, as a dispersoid, at least one hydrophobic substance selected from the group consisting of essential oils, oily flavorings, oily colors, fat-soluble vitamins, polyunsaturated fatty acids, animal or vegetable oils, sucrose acetate isobutyrate, and medium-chain triglycerides.

30 (Previously presented). An emulsion prepared by the method according to Claim 28.

31 (Previously presented). The emulsion according to Claim 30 which is an O/W or W/O/W

emulsion which contains, as a dispersoid, at least one hydrophobic substance selected from the group consisting of essential oils, oily flavorings, oily colors, fat-soluble vitamins, polyunsaturated fatty acids, animal or vegetable oils, sucrose acetate isobutyrate, and medium-chain triglycerides.